

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested. As an initial matter, Applicants thank the Examiner for the helpful telephone discussion on March 25, 2004 with the undersigned, during which the September 17, 2003 Reply to Restriction Requirement in the present application was discussed.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Election/Restriction

The Office Action states that Applicants had elected "Group I, claims 1-12 in the response of 9/17/03" and that claims 13-16 were withdrawn from consideration while claims 1-12 were examined. Applicants respectfully point out that in their September 17, 2003 Reply, Applicants elected to prosecute the subject matter of *Group III (claims 13-16)* (see page 1 of the Reply). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner now examine claims 13-16 and issue either a non-final office action or a Notice Allowability for those claims.

Objection to the Claims

Claims 1-12 were objected to because of alleged informalities. Applicants respectfully submit that this objection is rendered moot in view of the remarks set forth above regarding Applicants' election of claims 13-16. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1 and 3-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph.

Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is rendered moot in view of the remarks set forth above regarding Applicants' election of claims 13-16. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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